Another important effort in the same direction was concerned with the Abortion Laws. A distinguished surgeon out of public-spiritedness Informed the police that he had performed an abortion on a young girl whose pregnancy was the result of her having been raped. Legal proceedings were instituted, and the surgeon was acquitted, thereby making it easier for abortions to be performed in such cases in the future. This, too, seemed only a small step forward to abortion enthusiasts; but it was a step in the right direction, and they were grateful. One of them, female, wrote that when at last suitable legislation on the subject was introduced, it would have to "satisfy the eugenic conscience of the community.'

Sad it was for these reformers that just when their labours were bearing fruit, when the bigotry which had for so long frustrated their efforts was showing signs of total collapse, outside circumstances over which they had no control should arise to deprive them of the victory they deserved. Year by year resist-ance to the provision of birth-control information was diminish-ing, adultery losing its sting and abortion its odium, marriage broadening down from precedent to precedent and divorce being brought within reach of the poorest household; and then the process was violently interrupted. In the black-out, expecting sirens to sound, husband and wife were glad of one another's company even though their mating was eugenically unsuitable; children, spaced or unspaced, seemed precious, and abortions, with death and destruction threatening, unnecessary. The com-munity's eugenic conscience was for the time being quite

dormant.

IX

Not social services, or the Budget, or one another's eloquence, or the need for reforming laws relating to divorce and abortion, held the attention of Members of Parliament for long. Internal dissensions there might be, but they were soon forgotten. Groups formed only to unform again; opposition to the Government